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1962/10/20

DDI Briefing
20 October
White House
OVAN Room
1430-1500

Mr. President:

We want to bring you up to date ^{very briefly} on the deployment of

Soviet military weapons systems to Cuba. You have been

briefed many times on the major buildup of equipment in

Cuba prior to mid-October. ~~just about one week ago.~~

In the past week, in intensive photo reconnaissance

~~coverage beginning 14 October,~~ we have discovered

unmistakable evidence of the deployment to Cuba of medium

range ballistic missiles (i.e. 1020 NM range SS-4) and

intermediate range ballistic missiles (i.e. 2200 NM range

SS-5). These ranges imply coverage of targets ~~in the SE~~

United States ^{of Texas} inside an arc running roughly from Dallas through

Cincinnati and Washington, D. C. (on the ^{by} part of MRBMs) and

practically all of the continental United States (on the part of

by IRBMs).

There are at least ^{four} ~~one~~, and possibly five MRBM sites

deployed in field-^{type} ~~mobile~~ installations, ~~two for possibly three~~

in Western Cuba, i. e. nearest the United States, and two

somewhat more permanent looking, improved sites well to the

East of Havana. There are ^{would be} ~~in~~ accordance with standard Soviet-

~~military practice and what we see developing in Cuba, 4 launchers~~

at each site. Two of these sites probably are in a state of at least

limited operational readiness at this time, since the photography

shows field-type launchers in place and missiles ~~to be~~ at each site

(for a total of 16) on the ground -- not on-launcher -- at the sites as

of 14 and 17 October. All of the sites are in a state of continuous

~~construction~~ construction and improvement and we would expect the remaining

~~two or three~~ MRBM sites to become operational in about one week's time.

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In addition to these MRBM sites, two fixed IRBM sites (with four launch pads and permanent storage facilities) at each site are being constructed near Havana. One of these sites appears to be in a stage of construction that would lead to an estimate of operational readiness within ^{of} six weeks from now, i.e. about 1 December and the other in a stage indicating operational readiness between 15 December and the end of the year.

We have not seen nuclear warheads for any of these missiles, but we do not rely on ever seeing them in our photography

We have found what appears to be a nuclear warhead storage facility at one of the IRBM sites at Guanajay, near Havana. It will probably be completed about 1 December along with the missile site itself. We also note a port nearby with very special security protection facilities that would be suitable for offloading nuclear weapons.

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I should like to repeat that we do not have evidence of nuclear warheads in Cuba, but our estimate is that since the missile systems in question are relatively ineffective without them, ^{we believe} warheads either are or will be available. They could be in temporary storage prior to completion of the storage facility we have seen. The Politava, a Soviet ship which we think is the most likely carrier of security-sensitive military cargoes into the tightly guarded port of Mariel has made two trips to Cuba and is due back in about ten days.

In summary, we believe the evidence indicates the probability that eight MRBM missiles can be fired from Cuba today. Naturally operational readiness is likely to be degraded by many factors, but if all eight missiles could be launched with nuclear warheads, they could deliver a total load of 16-24 Megatons (2 to 3 MT per warhead). If able to refire, they could theoretically deliver the same load approximately five hours later.

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When the full installation of missile sites we now see under construction is completed at the end of the year, the initial salvo

(if all missiles or launchers were to reach target)
capability would be 56 - 88 MT.

